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ABSTRACT

This guide tells the story of a successful collaboration between The City Literary Institute and homelessness agencies to create an arts-based learning program for homeless people in central London. It identifies guidelines and good practice to stimulate similar work in other locations with problems of homelessness and rough sleeping. The guide is intended for managers in learning providers, homelessness agencies, and statutory and voluntary funders and for front-line teachers and workers with homeless people. Following an introduction and description of the Rolling Shelter project (RSP), a section identifies these issues managers must address in developing programs: building partnerships, developing provision, selecting a curriculum and teachers, triggering learner motivation, progression, and program sustainability and review. They are set out in a checklist, then expanded and illustrated with examples and quotations from RSP. Brief case studies follow. The next section suggests practice likely to produce successful learning for homeless learners: understanding the client group, working together, offering learners flexibility and choice, providing structures and outcomes, recording achievement, and encouraging progression. The key points are summarized in a checklist, then illustrated with quotations and case studies from RSP. Appendixes include lists of 8 publications and 16 useful websites and sample workshop forms. (YLB)

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# crossing the threshold

## successful learning provision for homeless people

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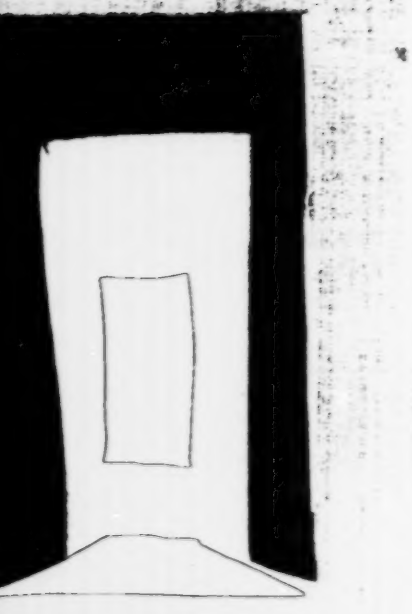

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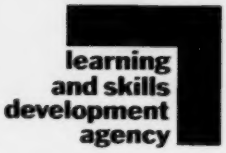


# crossing the threshold

## successful learning provision for homeless people

**Helen Cameron, Wendy McKaig and Sue Taylor**

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## Preface

Homelessness is on the increase. The government has acknowledged that it is a complicated problem, calling for a range of interventions if it is to be tackled successfully. In cities throughout the country, there are still people who sleep on the streets (although the number of 'rough sleepers' has declined).

It is tempting to focus on boosting the stock of available housing or hostel places as the solution. But, as a recent report shows, many homeless people need 'more than a roof' (ODPM June 2002). Many suffer multiple problems, such as poor mental or physical health, drug dependency and a lack of the skills necessary to get and keep a job or maintain a stable lifestyle.

What part can learning play in circumstances like these? The government's Rough Sleepers Unit called for 'innovative and pragmatic approaches which build self-esteem, bring on talents' (ODPM 1999) as a way of reconnecting homeless people with mainstream society. *Crossing the threshold* offers some pointers to the kind of 'joined-up' answers that are surely needed. The report is based on the experience and achievements of The City Literary Institute's 'Rolling Shelter' project. This project received the Learning and Skills Development Agency's 'Reaching Out' award in 2001 in recognition of its outstanding contribution to outreach and curriculum innovation.

The Rolling Shelter project illustrates what can be achieved by strong partnership between educators and those who work directly with homeless people. Using a learning programme that encompassed visual and performing arts, creative writing and IT, the project shows how homeless people can be helped to explore their talents and regain their self-esteem – crucial building blocks for progression to a more settled way of life.

In my work with disadvantaged young people at the Foyer Federation, we recognise the importance of integrating support and accommodation, and providing a 'springboard' for independent living. Opportunities for personal development and community learning play a crucial role in our work. I can therefore commend this publication to all those who are interested in the benefits of learning for homeless people. Whether your role is that of teacher, front-line shelter worker, manager or funder, the guide will be a valuable source of ideas and inspiration as well as of examples of 'tried and tested' approaches.

Carolyn Hayman, OBE
Chief Executive
The Foyer Federation

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# Introduction



## Purpose

Learning providers may feel that homeless people are 'too difficult' to engage as learners. Homelessness agencies may feel that it is 'too complicated' to provide learning for their clients. This guide tells the story of a successful collaboration between The City Literary Institute (a college dedicated to providing learning opportunities for adults and known as The City Lit) and a range of homelessness agencies, to create an arts-based learning programme for homeless people in central London. It identifies guidelines and good practice that could be used to stimulate similar work in other locations where there are problems of homelessness and rough sleeping.

## Audience

The guide is intended for people who work for learning providers, homelessness agencies, statutory and voluntary funders. It is designed both for managers within those organisations and for front-line teachers and workers with homeless people. The initiative to set up similar schemes could come from anyone in this audience, working in cooperation with others in their locality.

## Settings

This type of project could work in any place where homeless people meet that is under the management of a homelessness agency, such as a shelter, a hostel or a day centre. These settings are briefly defined below. It may also be possible to attract homeless people into college premises, but this is more likely to occur as a second step, than during initial engagement in learning.

- Shelters are the first point for rough sleepers when they decide or are persuaded to come off the streets. Residents have usually been identified by outreach teams and invited in for an intensive period of resettlement. Shelters can be very chaotic places due to the unstable lives of their residents, combined with the pressure to move quickly to more permanent accommodation.
- Hostels are the next stage of accommodation after a shelter. They can be both generalist and specialist, dealing with issues such as mental health, stabilisation for substance misuse, or working with older people. Residents are generally in hostels for 6–18 months before moving to their own accommodation.

- Day centres offer a range of services to clients, including access to advice, health care, education, meals and laundry facilities. They cater for rough sleepers, shelter and hostel residents and people who have recently been re-housed.

**Rationale for providing learning for this client group**

Tackling homelessness successfully requires more than putting a roof over people's heads. Learning has a key part to play in improving confidence, identifying opportunities for change and helping homeless and socially excluded people to stay off the streets.

The rationale for learning providers is:

- fulfilling their remit for widening participation
- promoting equality of opportunity.

The rationale for homelessness agencies is:

- fulfilling their remit to help clients move on to more stable and 'included' lifestyles.

The following activities help to make this happen.

For learning providers:

- actively recruiting in homelessness settings
- offering programmes in places where homeless people congregate
- making sure that homeless learners and those working with them contribute to decisions about learning provision.

For homelessness agencies:

- actively promoting the learning programme in the setting
- supporting residents in their search for housing, work and fulfilling leisure
- improving residents' access to learning opportunities.

*It was good to see residents who had been sleeping rough for such a long time begin to open up to each other and the staff. I believe that meaningful occupation is vital to the wellbeing of a shelter and in my mind should be at the centre of shelter life. I am now the project manager of an 84-bed hostel in Kent and hope to arrange a similar learning programme here.* Rolling Shelter manager

# The Rolling Shelter project



### How the project was set up

The project developed from the social learning activities that The City Lit had delivered in the government-funded 'cold weather shelters' since 1996. This experience showed that a programme of accessible arts-based learning could be effective in helping the most socially excluded to re-engage with society. That is not to say that it is the only factor, or by any means the most important factor, but that for some it acted as a turning point in their lives.

When the government launched the 'Coming in from the cold' strategy, funding for the cold weather shelters ceased, and a rolling programme of shelters was introduced. These rolling or temporary shelters encouraged a range of services, including health, homelessness and education services, to work together to engage quickly with rough sleepers and give them time to stabilise before moving on to more permanent accommodation.

St Mungo's – a large homelessness agency in London – was contracted to manage the rolling shelters. The staff at St Mungo's recognised the value of offering learning opportunities to residents; they also had previous experience of working with The City Lit, which had demonstrated the positive impact of activities to encourage engagement with learning. The two organisations therefore had an existing relationship on which to build. The challenge was to see how the work of previous years could be developed and applied in rolling shelters.

### Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of the Rolling Shelter project were to:

- make learning and personal development accessible to rough sleepers through a programme of intensive arts-based workshops
- enable people to explore their abilities, regain their self-esteem and develop essential life skills in order to reintegrate into mainstream society
- provide avenues of progression to a more settled way of life
- encourage decision-making and planning for the future
- provide access to a coordinated advice and guidance service to facilitate progress towards employability and further learning opportunities
- incorporate regular showcase activities to validate learner achievement, raise awareness of future activities, and signpost further learning opportunities
- ensure maximum accessibility and take-up of learning opportunities.



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The initial aim was to run only short intensive programmes of five sessions in 1 week with a showcase of work at the end, to fit in with the anticipated length of stay for residents – a maximum of 14 days. It became clear that people were actually staying in the shelters for a minimum of 3–4 weeks. This allowed more flexibility in the development and delivery of workshops with several longer programmes being run.

## Activities

In 2001 / 02, 21 short programmes or workshops were delivered in seven shelters, with 215 learners participating. Seventy-five per cent of learners completed a programme.

The curriculum was based on creative arts, which made it both accessible and engaging. It encompassed visual arts, performing arts, creative writing and, if the facilities were available, information technology (IT).

Before the workshops started, the experience and knowledge of shelter workers were sought to underpin the learning opportunities offered. Shelter workers have day-to-day contact with residents and know them best. They helped to clarify who would benefit from the workshops. The aim was that the workers should see the learning workshops as an integral part of the shelter and not something that was happening separately. Workers attended the workshops themselves when possible. Feedback from staff suggested that sharing the experience of learning with residents had a positive impact and also gave valuable support to teachers.

By taking part in workshops residents were encouraged to use their critical-thinking and decision-making skills. A key element was that learners would assess their own progress and take decisions for themselves about the work in which they were engaged. They would also be encouraged to express their opinions constructively, and listen actively to others. These all-important social skills can easily be eroded by life on the streets. At the end of a workshop, learners' work was 'showcased' to an audience of fellow residents and invited guests.

## Resources

The pilot phase of the Rolling Shelter project (2000 / 01) was funded by a grant from the Further Education Funding Council (now the Learning and Skills Council). In 2001 / 02 – the second year of operation – The City Lit made an important commitment to continue supporting the work by using the college's core funding. In that year, its spending on the Rolling Shelter project was approximately £43,000.

A project coordinator post which was part-time during the pilot phase has become full-time, to cope with demand from homelessness agencies. This also reflects a target group that has expanded from the initial focus on residents and staff in rolling shelters, to encompass those using venues such as hostels, day centres and specialist services such as substance misuse units.

Fifteen part-time, hourly paid teachers are contracted to run specific workshops, depending on the outcome of a needs assessment in each venue. Every teacher is guaranteed at least one 9-hour contract. Administrative support is provided by The City Lit.

### The challenges

The project was a learning process in itself. Not every workshop was a success and lessons have been learnt about how long learners can realistically be expected to engage, how best to recruit learners and how essential it is to have support from shelter workers.

A further lesson is that it is vital to take into account the reality of the lives of the rolling shelter residents and their priorities. On several occasions people said that they would love to attend the workshop, but would not be able to come at the beginning, because they had to satisfy their physical need for drugs or alcohol first. More often than not they would attend later on. The teachers' ability to be sympathetic and not judgemental about that aspect of their lives meant that residents were more likely to engage.

Learners who have problems with alcohol dependency often carry alcohol with them. Teachers and agency workers needed to decide whether taking alcohol into a session was acceptable.

Working with this target group is not easy. Their lives are often very chaotic and dominated by the constant struggle to get money and cope with addiction, as well as with physical and mental health problems. It was therefore essential for teachers to operate in a flexible way. The project benefited from a team of creative teachers who used imaginative approaches to draw in learners, coupled with the support and participation of shelter workers.

### Key outcomes and achievements

The achievements of the Rolling Shelter project can be summarised as:

- development of a successful learning model to engage rough sleepers in learning
- better communication and networking between voluntary sector agencies and the education sector in central London
- progression routes for learners to mainstream provision and advice and guidance services
- increased self-confidence and self-worth for participants.

In view of the very unsettled lifestyles of homeless people, the project has not collected detailed information on learners' progression when they leave a programme (see also page 35). However, feedback from project staff and homelessness agency partners testifies to the progress that learners make in their motivation and self-confidence – key attributes for a more stable future.

*Having a programme looking at meaningful occupation and personal development in the rolling shelters has clearly been beneficial. It gives service users the opportunity to become involved in activity that can result in them gaining a modicum of self-confidence and esteem. Such a programme also helps ... residents to focus on their future and can result in them progressing to a college or some other provision. Finally, such activity can also help minimise harm: if service users get involved in activity that takes them away from chaotic use of substances, then some progress has been made in terms of rehabilitation and the optimising of lifestyle.*

Homelessness agency group manager for work and learning services

**How the project has developed**

The programme of intensive workshops continued in the 2001 / 02 rolling shelters. Other programmes and initiatives have developed from the project. For example:

- longer learning programmes have been developed in two hostels
- a learning programme has started in a day centre that targets people with mental health problems in temporary accommodation for homeless people
- an informal three session pre-tenancy programme has been developed in a Salvation Army hostel, providing information and practical skills for those moving on to more settled accommodation.

The project continues to expand in response to demand for its services. As indicated earlier, workshops are now delivered in a wider range of venues than the pilot project and with a broader target audience, which now includes refugees and asylum seekers. In the light of this breadth, the project has been re-branded the '*Start*' Programme.

At a strategic level, The City Lit has been a key player in setting up a cross-sector forum between the voluntary sector and education sector in central London to encourage integration and dialogue and provide a more consistent and effective pathway for homeless learners.

*Homelessness can happen to anyone and once you are outside the mainstream of society it can be very difficult to get back in. Participation in learning and the improved self-esteem this generates can support reintegration.* Rolling Shelter project coordinator

# Guidelines for managers

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This section identifies issues that managers will need to address in developing programmes for homeless learners. These are set out in the checklist below, then expanded and illustrated with examples and quotations from the Rolling Shelter project.


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## Building partnerships

Partnership working is crucial to the success of engaging homeless learners. The key elements are shared attitudes, vision, resources and communication.

The knowledge, experience – and, indeed, enthusiasm – of both education and voluntary sector staff at all levels are equally important in the planning and delivery of learning programmes. It is through shared commitment and responsibility that structured educational activities become integrated into the services of a shelter, hostel or day centre. As one Rolling Shelter project teacher put it, 'We're all in it together. Yes there's shelter staff, there's residents, there's City Lit teachers, but when we're working on a project, we're sharing it'.

For homelessness agency staff who are interested in developing learning activities for their clients, useful starting points in establishing a partnership are:

- local FE colleges (ask to speak to a community education coordinator)
- local education authorities (LEAs) – ask for the adult and community learning service.

### Principles

Collaboration needs to be built at strategic and operational levels. This requires:

- committing time to building the partnership
- the right staff – organised, creative, flexible and willing to understand clients' lives and the implications for learning
- giving priority to good working relationships
- continuity of staffing made a priority
- service-level agreements drawn up to ensure clear accountability between organisations
- appointing a worker in each venue to liaise with the learning provider.

**Practicalities**

The lists below indicate the likely roles of the learning provider and homelessness agency.

The learning provider:

- identifies a curriculum offer for each venue
- consults with residents and workers on curriculum content
- designs and delivers a programme of learning activities
- provides supporting materials and teacher guidelines
- coordinates the programme across the venues and across the year
- specifies accommodation and resource requirements needed to run workshops
- recruits teaching staff both for their subject competence and their interest in the learner group
- supports the teaching staff through continuing professional development as well as practical help
- specifies expected outcomes of activities, monitors and records them appropriately
- develops appropriate performance indicators and reports on them regularly
- regularly 'showcases' achievements
- develops promotional materials
- supports homelessness agency staff in promoting and integrating the learning activities through review meetings
- evaluates learning programmes regularly.

The homelessness agency:

- provides suitable accommodation
- agrees times and dates of programmes and circulates these
- briefs staff teams at homelessness venues (including casual staff) about the learning programmes
- stimulates the interest and involvement of agency staff
- supports teachers in doing their job
- assists in the promotion of programmes to residents
- shows commitment to the value of learning programmes for the residents.

## Developing provision

Developing successful provision for homeless learners requires planning, sharing expertise across sectors and acknowledging the specific needs of the learners who are targeted. The Rolling Shelter project specifically offered 'engagement activities'. These are first-step programmes, aiming to involve learners in structured activity with a clear outcome and to encourage the development of learners' self-esteem and ability to plan for the future. The programme was appropriate for the target group and the context in which it was delivered. Essential ingredients for the success of the programme are outlined below.

### Understanding client needs

Listening to and acting upon the ideas and experience of homeless people should be intrinsic to the design of provision. This will enable staff to:

- gain a realistic understanding of the type of provision that will be suited to the client group
- improve the understanding of all involved of the specific needs of homeless learners.

### Consulting all parties

Involving all parties before the learning programme starts is likely to improve commitment and ownership. It will be important to:

- brief teachers on the aims of the programme, the venues and facilities available and then invite them to submit proposals (see the Appendix for a sample workshop proposal); teachers are likely to come up with creative and innovative approaches
- share the aims of the programme with homelessness agency workers and act on their feedback on its content and suitability
- seek the support of the agency managers; homelessness agency workers operate in a very demanding environment with many unpredictable claims on their attention; managers can encourage their staff to get involved, identify those with a real interest and – finance permitting – provide staff cover so that these staff are free to take part
- ask clients if they have particular interests or enthusiasms they would like to pursue
- consider incentives that will motivate homeless clients to attend – refreshments are a welcome attraction.

### Practical arrangements

Working in a venue supplied by a homelessness agency will require flexibility:

- check what physical space is available
- assess its suitability for different types of provision
- check what times of day it is available and how these fit with clients' use of the space
- check health and safety requirements.

> *In some venues the only space available for workshops was the dining area or residents' lounge. These were parts of the shelter where people would naturally gather and working in these areas had both benefits and drawbacks. There were always people around to recruit from and residents could also observe what was going on in a workshop before committing to it. These areas could also be chaotic and noisy. However, most teachers found that energy a positive thing.*
>
> Rolling Shelter project coordinator

### Securing resources

Calculate the additional costs and secure funding to cover them. Costs are likely to include:

- liaison time between the agencies involved
- recruitment of additional teachers and paired teaching
- payment to teachers for time taken to recruit participants
- costs of working away from an educational setting: moving materials, adapting accommodation, travel and liaison time, telephone and transport costs
- time to follow up learners who have expressed an interest in further learning – accepting that this is likely to be face-to-face rather than by letter or telephone.

Remember that charitable trusts as well as statutory funders may be interested in covering additional costs.

## Selecting a curriculum and teachers

Selecting a curriculum should take into account the venue, the learners being targeted and any activities already being offered. The choice of an arts-based curriculum for the Rolling Shelter project succeeded in engaging learners, as its informality and creative focus captured the interest of shelter residents. The intensive workshop model was appropriate for the length of time residents could realistically be expected to engage in a structured activity. There was also a good 'fit' with the typical length of stay at a shelter.

### Benefits of using an arts curriculum

- Creativity – it engages learners in a holistic way.
- Reduces boredom – a decision not to live on the streets may lead to feelings of boredom and purposelessness.
- Easy entry requirements – involvement must be immediate with no prior learning required.
- Low basic skills requirements – learners can engage in learning without having basic skills problems exposed.
- Expression of personal story – many learners appreciated the opportunity to express and reflect on what had happened to them.
- Mobile – materials can be used in a range of venues.
- Easily differentiated – learners can make progress at their own speed and build upon pre-existing ability.

### Selecting teachers

The following criteria may assist in selection:

- expertise in the subject area
- adult teaching or group working qualification
- excellent communication skills
- appreciation of the external factors that inhibit an individual's learning
- flexibility and ability to respond to client interests and enthusiasms
- ability to engage with innovative and creative approaches
- enthusiasm for sharing knowledge and skills in a way that allows learners to gain competence
- commitment to and ability to demonstrate knowledge of health and safety and equal opportunities issues

- awareness of other learning opportunities and progression routes
- awareness of their own boundaries and respect for those of the learners
- alertness to personal safety issues
- ability to reflect on and evaluate their work.

> *I think a mix of qualities as a teacher is useful: certainly flexibility and friendliness, openness, sensitivity and enthusiasm. As quite a shy person, one of the biggest challenges is to relax and be myself rather than 'trying too hard', while at the same time taking risks to connect with people. Offer people a quality of attention and listening. Be prepared for both anything and nothing to happen. Just create a space in which something positive and real can happen.*
>
> Rolling Shelter project teacher

**Supporting teachers**

- Brief teachers as a group, so that experiences and concerns can be shared.
- Pair teachers for mutual support. This is particularly important when working with a challenging client group. It enables a more experienced teacher to mentor a less experienced teacher.
- Team up teachers who have complementary specialisms.
- Ensure regular contact and networking with the programme coordinator, to deal with problems as they occur.
- Include this group of teachers in all institutional staff development.
- Provide specific staff training to encourage innovation (for example, use of video) and health and safety (such as contagious infection procedures).

## Triggering learner motivation

It can be difficult to engage this client group. Thought needs to be given to recruitment, drawing upon the support of the homelessness agency staff in the process. People who are homeless often feel powerless and lose motivation. Giving potential learners an opportunity to influence the development of learning can greatly benefit motivation and take-up.

An important goal for homelessness agencies is to reduce clients' dependency on their services. Participation in learning can be a valuable step to an independent life. Agency workers should therefore be encouraged to use their routine contacts with residents as opportunities to stimulate an interest in learning.

### Learner recruitment

- Display posters at the venue and make leaflets available (see the Appendix for a sample leaflet).
- Attend residents' meetings to promote activities and identify interested people.
- Build sufficient time into the teacher contract for talking to residents about the programme before the start of the sessions.
- Encourage residents to come in and watch the sessions without pressure to join in.
- Accept that learners may come in and out of sessions if they are having trouble concentrating.

> *Teachers used a variety of creative methods to generate interest. During a ceramics workshop at one shelter they left pieces of clay on boards around the communal areas of the shelter to allow residents to 'have a go' by themselves. All the clay was taken and several residents came down to the workshop as a result.*
>
> Rolling Shelter project coordinator

**Mobilising homelessness agency staff**

- Ensure all workers (including temporary and casual) receive information about the purpose of the programme as part of their induction.
- Share ideas about the workshops at the planning stage.
- Ensure workers receive information about specific programmes and ask them to display publicity and promote the event 2 days in advance.
- Encourage workers to discuss learning programmes at residents' meetings.
- Suggest that workers discuss learning programmes during their one-to-one sessions with residents. Taking part in learning could be seen as part of a resident's action plan for progression to a more independent lifestyle.
- Gather and act upon workers' feedback on the impact of the programmes on the residents.

> *The shelter staff feedback suggested that this learning opportunity gave residents fresh alternatives from their normal street behaviours. It also allowed them to explore aspects of their lives previously untouched or avoided. It was a way of expressing themselves that didn't require them to be skilled in advance. In some cases, it gave some of them a chance to show off previously hidden talents to others.*
>
> Homelessness agency manager

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## Progression

Shelter workers aim to help learners make a transition to a more stable and secure lifestyle. Learning can play a valuable role in this transition, providing a sense of purpose and a feeling of empowerment.
Homeless people often feel that they are living 'in limbo' while in shelter or hostel accommodation and that they cannot undertake mainstream education until they are fully resettled. Progressing to mainstream provision while in a shelter or hostel should not be ruled out.
Staff support should be provided if the transition to a more formal learning environment is proving difficult.

### Links to guidance, further learning and support

- Where possible arrange for an outreach guidance worker, briefed on the needs of the client group, to be available to learners.
- Otherwise, support learners in making appointments with guidance services.
- Note that those who have recently become homeless may still have jobs or be more easily reintegrated into mainstream provision than people who have been homeless for a longer period.
- Be aware that those who have been homeless for some time may have more turbulent lives and find the thought of decision-making and planning too threatening. Access to other learning provision and in particular IT and basic skills may be important, following the initial programme.
- Utilise all resources available, including charitable funding and learner support funds for course fees and other costs.

### Support on the pathway to more permanent housing

- Confidence in participating in constructive activity can be an important source of support when progressing to more permanent housing.
- Involvement in a life skills learning programme can directly support the learner in transition to a tenancy and help to maintain it.

**case study Jamie**

On the first day of the workshop Jamie was doing a jigsaw in the dining-room while the teachers were working with the group. He was interested in what was going on but didn't want to get involved so he carried on with his jigsaw. He admits that he didn't get much of it finished as he always had one ear on what the group was doing. His interest was captured. He says:

*The following week, now that was different. I met one of the teachers, she asked me to write something. I did, I wrote a poem called 'A fix'. Now I write all the time. I've written about 70 poems and now I'm writing a book.*

Jamie has discovered an outlet for emotions and experiences he has kept bottled up for many years and an enthusiasm for learning and creative expression. 'I've started to use my imagination and think about what I want to do with my life. This is the first time I've actually thought my life could be different.' Jamie is now settled in a hostel in south London and a move to his own flat is imminent. He attends two informal creative writing groups and is about to progress to mainstream provision at The City Lit. Most importantly, he's still drug free. 'I have this belief in myself thanks to The City Lit. What I want to do is be the best I can be because I spent so many years asleep, brain not working, now it is!'

## Programme sustainability and review

The continuation of learning programmes depends on the venue in which they are delivered and, of course, on funding. Some shelters, for instance, are open for short periods only, so the learning offered there would be for a set period. Other venues, such as hostels and day centres, offer more scope to develop programmes encompassing a range of educational activities. Regular evaluation should be at the heart of any programme, to ensure that the learning continues to meet clients' needs.

### Additional costs

- Learners leading chaotic lifestyles find it difficult to 'stay the course'. This has a direct impact on funding and affects the extent to which the costs of the programme can be covered using colleges' core funding.
- Additional costs should have been identified at the beginning and additional funding sought to cover the start-up phase. An important aspect of sustainability is identifying any additional ongoing costs and how they will be covered.

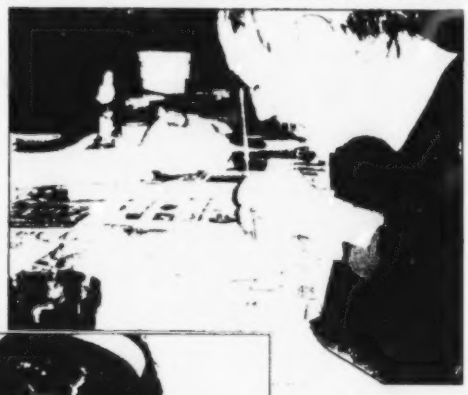
### Programme review

The following methods are recommended.

- Use enrolment forms combined with a 'logsheet' to make it easier for learners to give feedback (see sample in the Appendix).
- Request structured feedback from teachers and agency workers at regular intervals and at the end of the programme (see sample feedback and evaluation forms in the Appendix).
- Use meetings of partnership stakeholders to evaluate feedback and include it in forward-planning.
- Summarise lessons learned and recommend improvements in project reports.

**case study Clay and plaster**

Learners created objects from clay and worked with teachers to exhibit these.



**case study Making faces**

Learners created faces and masks using clay and decorated these.

**case study** **Photography and writing workshop**

Working from the theme 'Past, present, future', learners identified images that represented their experiences or hopes and recorded these visually and wrote about them.

**case study** **Photography and writing workshop**

Working from the theme 'Past, present, future', learners identified images that represented their experiences or hopes and recorded these visually and wrote about them.

**The Past**

My past is a disaster.
I can't remember much, but it was not good stuff.
I had the drugs and the drugs had me.
The first time I felt beautiful as a person was when
I married at 25. My wife had a baby son
I stayed with them until my son was 2 years old.
But then there was problems with my woman. I was taking
drugs every day. I had no job, no money, so it finished.
So I've had love in my life.
I remember this every day.

Antonio

*The past*
by Antonio

**The Present**

The present is about change.
Staying in the hostel is good
because I can think about what
I need to do to change my life.

Antonio

*The present*
by Antonio



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**case study** **Photography and writing workshop**

Working from the theme 'Past, present, future', learners identified images that represented their experiences or hopes and recorded these visually and wrote about them.

**Dream**

I could see flashes in the distance.
For I did think it was a firework display.
But it was like fire shooting down to the earth.
For I did think they were trying to get rid of me.
But all of a sudden it did change to a tidal wave of water.
For I did think it was so good for the fire
to be put out by the water.

Colin

*Dream*
by Colin

**Reality**

In 1970 there was a big fire in my own town called Carlisle.
For it was a sweet factory and all I could see from a
distance was a lot of smoke. I thought of what it could
be for. I did not know at the time. I was living with my
Mum & Dad and my two sisters. I was a very young boy.
I did play truant from school and it was a very cold day,
so I went into an old barn and decided to make a fire.
For I did get into trouble with the police,
and I did get 3 years approved school training.
For I did feel very guilty at 17.

Colin

*Reality*
by Colin

**case study** **Photography and writing workshop**

Working from the theme 'Past, present, future' learners identified images that represented their experiences or hopes and recorded these visually and wrote about them.

**Past**

For when I did live at home with my family I did used to
look at the fire and think of what nice caves
I could see by putting logs on the fire.
For I did think of it a lot.
The other day I was filling up a lighter and
I thought it was OK. But when I did ignite it
it did catch fire in my right hand, but I did not burn myself.

Colin

*Past*
by Colin

**The Meaning of Life**

The meaning of life for me is about an orange.
One side is about the edge, and distance.
The other side is a larger life,
about seeing a brighter future.

Colin

*The meaning of life*
by Colin



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**case study** **Creative photography**

A short project in which learners developed their understanding of the rules of creative photography and how to capture good images. They worked on a theme of their choice and edited and displayed the results.

*Architecture. Reaching for the sky*
by Stephen

**Architecture. Reaching for The Sky**
Ker[illegible]n Den from Tower Bridge.
Abstract composition, colour and reflection

Learning about photography with an ordinary disposable camera. I set off for an all day shoot. It was a lovely sunny day in Autumn. My journey started at London Bridge. Crossing the bridge to Bank, and through the City. Snap, snap all the way. There are many different aspects to photography, which I will point out on the way.

Stephen
(A piece from a longer project)

*In the shadow of the dark night of the soul*
by Mike
with words
by Mirabai Starr

**In The Shadow of The Dark Night of The Soul**
Words by Mirabai Starr and photography by Mike

The emptiness of the dark night is yielding emptiness
It is an emptiness that gives way to all possibility,
which manifests as limitless diversity.
Which circles back to emptiness
It is the impossible-to-translate Sunyata of Buddhism.
It is the living substratum of all reality.
It is rooted in quiet.



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# Good practice for teachers and homelessness agency workers



This section suggests practice likely to produce successful learning for homeless learners. The key points are summarised below to act as a checklist. The section is illustrated with quotations and case studies from the Rolling Shelter project.

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## Understanding the client group

Learning providers are experienced in working across different cultures and over a broad range of age bands. Some, however, may have little experience of working with learners who have a history of rough sleeping, physical and / or mental health problems and substance misuse problems.

Taking time to develop and deliver an appropriate curriculum that responds to the specific needs and experience of this client group will promote greater participation and achievement. It is important to recognise that homelessness is a state of mind as much as a physical reality. In order to have a chance of a life off the street, people have to think of themselves as not being homeless. Even in the midst of addiction, mental health problems and a chaotic lifestyle, a willingness to engage in learning and find creative talents can be brought out.

### Impact of homelessness on learning

Teachers will need to bear in mind that homeless people may:

- have low self-esteem and high levels of anxiety about learning
- exhibit a wider range of learner abilities and needs than 'conventional' groups
- be 'out of practice' in social and communication skills
- not be in full control of their own timetable, having appointments with various support services
- have unhappy previous experiences of learning environments
- experience a lot of disrespect and appreciate having their opinion sought
- need extra time to build relationships and trust
- be easily deterred by the bureaucracy and form-filling sometimes required from learners
- have other priorities (housing, employment, drug or alcohol dependency) that come before a commitment to learning.

The charity Shelter has identified the following factors that make people at risk of becoming homeless.

- Over half of street sleepers have mental health problems, the vast majority of which existed before they became homeless.
- Around half have alcohol problems.
- Around one-fifth have drug problems.
- Street sleepers have two to three times more health problems than the general population.
- Between one-quarter and one-third have spent part of their childhood in local authority care.
- Around half have been in prison or on remand at some point.
- Between one-quarter and one-fifth have served in the armed forces at some stage.
- There is often a history of family or relationship breakdown.
- Street homeless people have fewer qualifications than the rest of the population and 90% of them are unemployed.

Source: Carter 2001

## Working together

Delivering successful education programmes for learners with complex support needs requires teachers and partner organisation staff to collaborate and share expertise. Working together on a project presents opportunities to enhance understanding of each other's sector and always has a positive impact on learner recruitment, support and progression.

### Listening to each other's expertise

- Share understanding of each other's organisational cultures. Teachers and workers can give each other new insights into the potential of homeless clients. Homelessness agency workers are a valuable guide to the residents and a source of practical support.
- Remember each partner has different accountability and reporting requirements.

### Engaging clients together

- Not all residents will think the programmes are a good idea, so be prepared for some negative attitudes.
- Know your limitations as a teacher when it comes to handling difficult behaviour. Do not try to cope with a situation that should be dealt with by homelessness agency workers. Your personal safety is paramount.
- You are a teacher not a counsellor. Although you may feel sympathetic towards your learners and want to help them, you are not there to deal with personal issues. If a situation arises that you cannot cope with, refer it to agency workers.

### Supporting each other in practical ways

- Acknowledge the time commitments and factor these into both the developmental phase and the ongoing work.
- When working in communal areas bear in mind this is shared space. Be aware of each other's needs.
- Remember that your learners may have experienced serious abuse in the past and be very vulnerable. Respect their boundaries and be very clear about your own.

> *The photography workshop concentrated on residents thinking and talking about their past, present and future and many views and experiences were shared which enabled shelter staff to appreciate and help clients more effectively.*
>
> Homelessness agency worker

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## Offering learners flexibility and choice

Delivering learning programmes in shelters, hostels and day centres will mean working with learners who have varying skills, abilities and experiences. The challenge is to attract and retain the interest of learners. This will require teachers to be flexible and responsive in their planning and delivery. To motivate learners and help them stay on course, a degree of choice should be offered within the programme to enable them to explore and express their ideas.

### Learner centred

- By talking to residents and agency staff, be aware of issues facing the learners and respect confidentiality.
- Encourage learners to express and reflect upon their story, experience and knowledge.
- Don't be afraid to change plans if the situation demands it.

**case study** **The 'goodbye' mural**

A visual arts workshop had been scheduled for one of the shelters and the teacher who was leading the group had a clear plan of what she was going to do. On the day, however, she soon realised that her aims for the workshop were impracticable as the shelter was particularly chaotic because it was just about to be closed. She had the choice of going home or being creative. In this instance she started a 'goodbye' mural in the dining-room, which staff and residents used to express their feelings about the shelter closing. The workshop had very positive feedback. Shelter staff and residents were grateful for a way to say goodbye and 'thank you', and wish people good luck for the future.

### Participative

- Engage learners in activity as soon as possible.
- Don't expect high levels of interaction between learners.

*I have witnessed a large input and a fleeting input from some learners but whatever the degree of involvement may have been, if a form of expression has been shared then both types of involvement have been equally successful.* Rolling Shelter project teacher

**Bringing out prior learning and talent**

- Ask learners individually if they have any prior experience and encourage them to build on that.

**Building self-esteem**

- Encouraging learners to complete a task will give a sense of accomplishment.
- 'Showcasing' what has been produced can lead to positive feedback and encouragement from others.

**case study Susan**

Susan was very marginalised in the shelter and had a very poor self-image. She was unpopular with other residents and her presence in the visual arts workshop discouraged other people from attending in the early stages. Although she constantly put down both herself and the work she was doing, she came to the group every week. According to the manager this was the first time she had made this kind of commitment to anything. She was disruptive in the group and was essentially challenging the teachers to exclude her. They didn't. And through encouragement to focus on her work and her progression she became less attention-seeking. By the mid-point in the project other residents were coming to the group despite Susan's presence and she was seen to be more sociable and less disruptive. It was a testament to the teachers and their teaching that they were able to manage a very difficult learner as well as engage many others in the workshop.

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## Providing structures and outcomes

The lifestyle of homeless people is often full of interruptions. Engaging in short learning programmes offers participants structure and the chance to start, complete and achieve something.

### Appropriate structures

- The primary learning needs, applicable to everyone, include: engagement in a learning activity and development of essential life skills; self-confidence; and self-esteem. Life skills encompass: working with others; communication skills; making choices; re-assessing skills, abilities and opportunities; planning for the future.
- Assessment of learning needs should be a continuous process.
- Helping learners to set goals is an intrinsic part of the process not an end in itself.

### Outcomes

- In their proposals, teachers should identify learning outcomes for each session and assess what learners have gained. (See the Appendix for a sample proposal form and teacher's feedback form.)
- Publicity for each workshop should outline what learners can expect to learn.
- Learners should be made aware of what they are meant to be learning, what the aims are and what they can achieve by the end. Invite learners to sign a simple 'learning agreement form' at the beginning of each session to show that they know what to expect. Invite them to add feedback comment at the end. (See the Appendix for a sample learning agreement form.)
- Generic outcomes should include an ability to: set goals; communicate with others; make choices; review progress; reassess goals.

## Recording achievement

Recording and celebrating achievement is essential when working with homeless learners. Teachers should continually identify and acknowledge individual and group progress, as this does a great deal to improve learners' self-esteem and motivation to succeed.

### Sample records

- Teachers can discuss with the group what has been learnt and achieved in each session and record this in their feedback sheets. Discussion is generally the most appropriate method of assessment and evaluation for this target group.
- Evaluation forms require teachers to assess whether learning outcomes have been met and what learners have learnt. (See the Appendix for a sample evaluation form.)

### Showcase and celebrate

The importance of celebrating achievement cannot be over-emphasised. In The City Lit project, a showcase is an occasion when learners' work is displayed for their peers and an invited audience. Its purposes are to:

- validate learner achievement
- give learners a different sense of themselves
- give homelessness agency workers a new understanding of the residents
- get feedback from learners about their experience
- raise awareness of the project among shelter residents and encourage future participation
- give teachers the opportunity to meet one another, see what the project is offering and make links
- raise senior managers' awareness of this important work which happens outside the college setting and is therefore less 'visible'
- make contact with other agencies.

### Importance of photo records

- Learners will probably not be able to take their work with them. Photographs of learners with their work or certificate will be an important reinforcement of achievement.
- Photographs also act as an incentive to other venues and funders, showing what can be achieved.

### Recognising unrecordable achievement

Some of the most important achievements will inevitably go unrecorded. In these circumstances, recognition for effort is crucial in helping homeless people to move on. This includes:

- finishing something
- having something to show
- peer recognition
- external recognition – where possible invite external figures to present certificates.

**case study Jean**

Jean was a shelter resident who participated in many workshops there. His most significant achievement was on the Open Forum Performing Arts workshop where he used his experience of drug addiction and mental health problems to create a poem. He subsequently developed it into a performance piece that was filmed by the teachers. The final piece was shown at the showcase. It is a very powerful and moving film that gave a real insight into the mind and experience of someone whose life has become a perpetual cycle of drug abuse, paranoia and despair. The way in which he performed it was a testament to the work of the teachers and Jean was amazed by what he had achieved. He said it helped a great deal to have externalised those thoughts and feelings at last. The fact that he had produced something positive offered a kind of closure to his earlier experiences. He also spoke of the impact the workshop had on his confidence and that he felt more positive about the future. Every teacher who worked with him spoke about his creativity. By engaging in the project he discovered an aspect of his personality that he had never thought existed.

## Encouraging progression

Participating in 'threshold' learning activities can be the start of a longer-term commitment to education. It is crucial to capitalise on the motivation that comes with taking that first step. Learners may need support with accessing information and making choices about future learning. Homelessness sector agencies have recognised the importance of offering Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services as part of successful resettlement. Many larger agencies and some learning providers also have mentoring schemes.

Close links with City Lit advice and guidance services are an integral part of the Rolling Shelter project. Since 2001, a designated outreach advice and guidance worker from The City Lit attends showcase events to give impartial information to learners. Learners are encouraged to use the Learning Centre at The City Lit where they can access library facilities, computers, basic skills and dyslexia support, study skills and Learndirect provision.

Future plans include an induction session for learners on 'St*art*' Programme provision (the new name of the Rolling Shelter project), to encourage progression to mainstream learning programmes. Learners will be invited to The City Lit to find out more about the services available to them, and to join the Learning Centre.

Tracking the progress of homeless people is difficult once they leave a shelter, because of the chaotic nature of their day-to-day lives. This is especially true of those who go back to life on the street. The City Lit therefore decided not to set up formal procedures to collect information on progression. Instead, it has concentrated on developing a strong framework for advising and informing clients about their options, as described above and in the guidelines that follow.

### Briefing guidance workers, teachers and key workers

- If a specialist outreach worker is not available, brief guidance workers on the needs of clients seeking progression.
- Teachers have an important role in providing information and advice at the point of need. Teachers need the relevant knowledge and skills for this role. Joint training of IAG workers and teachers is beneficial.

### Staying in touch

- Clients may move frequently, so information about progression is more likely to come through personal contact than through letters or phone calls. Ongoing links between teachers and workers will facilitate this.

**case study Richard**

Richard was a resident at one shelter and took advantage of all the learning opportunities available to him during his stay. He participated in the clay and plaster workshop, the mural project and the photography project 'A day in the life...' He exemplified how a relationship breakdown, a run of bad luck and the lack of a support network can lead to homelessness. He had not been on the street for very long (about 4 months), and didn't have a serious substance misuse problem, but admitted that at times of stress he would drink heavily to cope. He was also aware that his drinking could have become much worse if he had been on the street for much longer.

Richard had a positive attitude and said that having access to the workshops helped him to focus his thinking on the future, improved his self-confidence and motivated him to move on. His work for the photography project developed into a feature for The City Lit student newsletter and he successfully applied for an Individual Learning Account, which he used for a computing course. He also represented the Rolling Shelter project learners at The City Lit Adult Learners Week event and the New Learning Opportunities award ceremony. He took advantage of the advice and guidance services of The City Lit and went on to train to be a bus driver. One reason he chose to do this was that it would force him to limit his drinking as he is still living in a hostel, where the temptation to drink to excess is always present.

Richard is undoubtedly one of the success stories of the project and we have kept in touch with him. He has come a long way since his time on the street and is working hard to regain a life for himself.

## Examples of activities

Flexibility and choice in the activities offered were emphasised earlier as important ingredients. The outlines below are therefore presented merely as illustrations. They summarise themes and activities from Rolling Shelter workshops in six different locations in the period December 2000 to August 2001.

workshop theme **Photography and writing**

learning hours 9 hours

activities Working from the theme 'Past, present, future', learners identified images that represented their experiences or hopes and recorded these visually and wrote about them.

workshop theme **Cabaret**

learning hours 9 hours

activities Learners worked with teachers to develop performance pieces. These included poems, songs and jokes. A cabaret showcase was performed at the end.

workshop theme **Words and pictures**

learning hours 10 hours

activities Learners worked to create their own artwork as well as examining source material. Writing about images was central to the course. A visit to Tate Modern was incorporated.

workshop theme **Voyager – newsletter project**

learning hours 38 hours, between 4 shelters

activities The newsletter aimed to give a voice to and celebrate the achievements of the many people who have taken part in and supported the Rolling Shelter project. Inputs are encouraged at a number of different levels, such as developing material, editing, layout, graphics, IT skills.

workshop theme **Clay and plaster**

learning hours 9 hours

activities Learners created objects from clay and worked with teachers to exhibit them.

workshop theme **Mural project**

learning hours 20 hours

activities Learners worked with a teacher to develop a theme for a mural in the shelter main hallway, then designed and painted it.

workshop theme **'A day in the life...'**

learning hours 9 hours

activities Learners decided how they would wish to interpret this theme, worked with the teacher to learn technique, then recorded the images they had planned, using disposable cameras.

workshop theme **Your shout!**

learning hours 10 hours

activities Using classic and contemporary monologues as a starting point, learners examined their own stories and developed them. The stories were recorded on video, giving learners the opportunity to gain experience in using this equipment.

workshop theme **T-shirt design**

learning hours 9 hours

activities Learners designed and made their own T-shirts.

workshop theme **Leave your mark!**

learning hours 12 hours

activities A project for residents and staff to develop a written and image-based mural, to enable them to express their feelings about the closure of the shelter.

workshop theme **Photo-journalism**

learning hours 9 hours

activities Learners covered an event visually and in writing and worked with teachers to produce and distribute the newsletter *Tavistock times*.

workshop theme **Computers don't byte**

learning hours 20 hours

activities A teacher worked with learners to develop basic IT skills, covering topics such as creating and saving files, toolbars and formatting. Learners produced a certificate and a CV.

workshop theme **Making faces**

learning hours 9 hours

activities Learners created faces and masks using clay and decorated these.

workshop theme **Open forum**

learning hours 12 hours

activities Learners worked with teachers to develop an aspect of performing arts such as writing, movement, poetry and song. Visits to recordings and performances were planned.

workshop theme **Souvenir from a special place**

learning hours 9 hours

activities A project to create a piece of work or sculpture that evokes a sense of a 'special place', drawing on learners' memories.

workshop theme **Wave goodbye, say hello ... looking beyond the ending**

learning hours 9 hours

activities This workshop used visual arts to support residents and provide a vehicle for them to express their feelings about the shelter closing. A variety of 2D and 3D art techniques were used.

workshop theme **Your voice, your story**

learning hours 10 hours

activities Looking at the art of the 'story'. Stories we remember, reading stories to the group, developing new stories and recording them. Learners were also encouraged to develop their writing skills by putting their stories down on paper.

workshop theme **Symbolic objects: making pictures, telling stories**

learning hours 9-hour intensive course plus 6-week (12-hour) project

activities A project in which learners chose an object of personal significance which they used to create a 'story' in visual form, for display in the hostel.

workshop theme **My CD**

learning hours Taster sessions (3 hours) and longer courses (9–17 hours)

activities Taster session for learners to familiarise themselves with course content and music technology software.

Learners began to use music technology software and worked towards producing tracks, recording, editing and mixing.

Learners learned about music technology using Rebirth and Cubase software. They produced tracks, recorded, edited, mixed and used effects to produce their own CD.

## Health and safety

Homelessness is not a healthy lifestyle. Sadly, many homeless people are vulnerable to infections and disease. This in turn puts shelter workers and teachers at risk. Homelessness agency staff should be knowledgeable about the risks and the clients; confidentiality policies may mean that they are not always able to inform teachers of risks posed by particular individuals.

### Simple steps to protect from infection

- Do not share cups; if possible, use disposable crockery and cutlery.
- If you smoke you may be asked for a 'twos'; this means sharing a cigarette. If you want to do this take your half first, then pass on the cigarette, not the other way round. Do not take the cigarette back again.
- Find out the procedure for blood spills.
- Never deal with blood without using gloves.
- If you have any cuts on your hands, cover them with plasters.
- If you find used 'sharps' such as hypodermic needles in your work area, do not touch them. Report this immediately to a member of staff.

### Other health and safety considerations

- Follow the personal safety procedures of the organisation you are working in, including those concerned with signing in and out, communicating your whereabouts and using personal alarms or radios.
- Seek help immediately if any untoward situation develops between you and learners or between learners.
- Resist provocation.
- Do not get involved in substance misuse.

## Publications

Carter M (July 2001). *Street homelessness*. Shelter. Available on the Shelter website www.shelter.org.uk

Foyer Federation (2001). *Make or break: how homeless young people struggle to fulfil their potential*. Foyer Federation.

Maxted P (1999). *Realising potential: helping homeless and disenchanted young people back into learning*. Campaign for Learning and Foyer Federation.

ODPM (1999). *Coming in from the cold: the government's strategy on rough sleeping*. Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Available on the ODPM website www.homelessness.odpm.gov.uk

ODPM (summer 2001). *Coming in from the cold: second progress report on the government's strategy on rough sleeping*. Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Available on the ODPM website www.homelessness.odpm.gov.uk

ODPM (2002). *Homelessness statistics – September 2002*. Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Available on the ODPM website www.homelessness.odpm.gov.uk

ODPM (June 2002). *More than a roof: a report into tackling homelessness*. Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Available on the ODPM website www.homelessness.odpm.gov.uk

Social Exclusion Unit (July 1998). *Rough sleeping: report by the Social Exclusion Unit (July 1998)*. Available on the Social Exclusion Unit website www.socialexclusionunit.gov.uk

## Useful websites

Association of Charitable Foundations
www.acf.org.uk

The Big Issue
www.bigissue.co.uk

Campaign for Learning
www.campaignforlearning.org.uk

The City Lit
www.citylit.ac.uk

Crisis
www.crisis.org.uk

English Churches Housing Group
www.echg.org.uk

Foyer Federation
www.foyer.net

Groundswell
www.groundswell.org.uk

Homeless Link
www.homeless.org.uk

NIACE – the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education
www.niace.org.uk

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
Rough Sleepers Unit
www.homelessness.odpm.gov.uk

Salvation Army
www.salvationarmy.org.uk

Shelter
www.shelter.org.uk

Social Exclusion Unit
www.socialexclusionunit.gov.uk

St Mungo's
www.mungos.org.uk

UK Coalition on Older Homelessness
www.olderhomelessness.org.uk

## Appendix



the City Lit

Rolling Shelter Programme 2000/01

# Workshop Proposal

Please provide as much information as possible about your proposed workshop. If your idea does not fit with the intensive format and you would like to propose an alternative please do so in the space provided over the page.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Teacher** | A. Tutor |
| **Workshop Title** | Making Faces |
| **Workshop Venue** | Tavistock House |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Day 1** | **Recruitment** 1 hour | **Session 1** | **Session 2** |
| Date: 27.2.01 | Time: 2.30-3.30pm | Time: 3.30-5.30pm | Time: : 6.30-8pm |
| **Day 2** | | **Session 3** | **Session 4** |
| Date: 28.2.01 | | Time: 3.30-5.30pm | Time: : 6.30-8pm |
| **Day 3** | | **Session 5** Showcase of work | |
| Date: 1.3.01 | | Time: 6.30-8pm | |

### Outline of content

Using photographic images from newspapers and magazines the students will begin by exploring facial expressions and identifying how they convey feelings. The students will then choose one expression to try out and be photographed.
Using their analytical and observation skills, the students will examine their photographs and make a clay mask based on either their own or another member of the group.
By the end of the workshop the students will be able to replicate a chosen expression, begin to understand and use proportion, use the digital camera, work with clay, use modelling tools and produce a finished piece of work.

### Materials required

Clay, boards, modelling tools, mirrors, PVA glue, paints, brushes, newspapers, magazines. Access to the digital camera for at least one day.

### Suggestions for co-tutor subject

It would be useful to work with another visual arts teacher. Other than that, anyone who is enthusiastic about the workshop!

2 of 2 **Workshop proposal**

**Any other information/questions**

Because we will be working with clay and it will need time to dry it would be best if we can work in a space where work in progress can be left out. This would be impossible in the dining area where I believe workshops usually happen. Any chance of a finding a separate space for this?

| Alternative Structure Proposal | |
|---|---|
| **Length of course** | |
| **Dates** | |
| **Times** | |
| **Reason for this structure** | |

Sample workshop information : 'Making faces'

Rolling Shelter Programme 2000/01

# Making Faces

- on Tuesday 27 and Wednesday 28 February
- from 1 – 3pm and 6.30 – 8.00pm

- *The workshop will cover*
- Looking at facial expressions and how they convey feelings
- Using clay and other materials
- Making a mask from clay
- Using tools with clay

- *There will be a showcase of work produced on Thursday 1 March from 6.30 – 8.00pm*

- Speak to member of staff if you would like to join. Hope to see you there!



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**Group enrolment form, learning agreement and workshop attendance log**

**ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME 2001/02**
**GROUP ENROLMENT FORM, LEARNING AGREEMENT AND WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE LOG**

**Workshop:**
**Course code:**
**Teacher/s:**
**Venue:**
**Start and end dates:**
**Times:**
**Date of session: ___/___/___**

**LEARNING AGREEMENT & FEEDBACK:**
**Please sign the logsheet to confirm that you know what to expect from the workshop. Please add a comment about the session at the end. What did you learn?**

I enjoyed the session! It was ok. I didn't like the session.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **PRINT NAME:**<br>**SIGN NAME:**<br>**DATE OF BIRTH:**<br>**MALE ☐ FEMALE ☐** | | | |
| **PRINT NAME:**<br>**SIGN NAME:**<br>**DATE OF BIRTH:**<br>**MALE ☐ FEMALE ☐** | | | |
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| **PRINT NAME:**<br>**SIGN NAME:**<br>**DATE OF BIRTH:**<br>**MALE ☐ FEMALE ☐** | | | |

1 of 3 **Teacher's feedback and evaluation forms**

**Teacher - Session Feedback:**

**What did you cover in the session today?**

- *What learning outcomes did you plan for?*
- *What was the content?*
- *What teaching methods did you use?*

**What did the students learn?**

- *Were the aims of the session met?*
- *Did they agree the learning outcomes with you?*
- *What did the students take away from the session? How do you know?*

**Any problems and any ideas about solving them?**

- *Is there anything which is preventing you from running the sessions the way you would like to? E.g. Student behaviour, recruiting students, accommodation, Health & Safety issues, resources, timing of sessions, staff development.*

**What can the project co-ordinator do to help?**

- *How can we help you to resolve any issues you are facing?*
- *How can we best support you in doing your job?*
- *Do you need us to liaise with shelter staff on your behalf?*
- *Are there any staff development issues we can help you with?*

**Teacher (print name): _____ Teacher's signature _____**

2 of 3 **Teacher's feedback and evaluation forms**

Rolling Shelter Programme 2000/01

## *Workshop Evaluation*

**Teachers' names: A. Tutor and A. N. Other**

**Workshop Title: Making Faces**

**Shelter: Tavistock House**

***Please comment on the following:***

### Timing, structure and resourcing of the workshop

The timing of the workshop was good as it was run over the afternoon and early evening (around the evening meal) in order to increase attendance. The fact is that there are more people in the shelter around meal times to recruit from. I thought this worked well in increasing contact and encouraging students. The structure worked well too. It allowed students to come to a session to see if they liked it and then have a break. Students were able to see if the workshop was of interest to them and also see how they would be supported in their learning. Students were able to come to every session or had the freedom to stay for a shorter time. There was a mix of attendance patterns but a good number of participants came to at least 3 sessions out of 5. Some people came on the second day because they had heard from other residents who had been on the first day that it was good. This was very encouraging for us. The workshop was well resourced for what we wanted to achieve.

### Support you received from shelter staff

Really good! The staff at Tavistock were friendly and accommodating – particularly as they allowed us to use their staff room for the workshop. They were also interested in what was going on and the work the students were engaged in. Many of the staff would pop in throughout the sessions to see what happening and were very helpful – offering to get hot drinks, etc. They clearly thought the workshop was a good idea and encouraged residents to join in. They allowed one resident to continue to work on her pieces when we were not there which she greatly appreciated. We were pleased and encouraged by the support we received from Tavistock staff, it really does make a big difference when they are actively involved.

### Support you received from City Lit staff

Excellent – Very supportive as usual, helping to set up for sessions and showcase. (Thanks)

### What were the advantages/disadvantages of working with a co-tutor?

Advantages were numerous, disadvantages – none. She is a very experienced tutor and I learnt a lot from her. We worked well together and had different ideas and styles to bring to the workshop. It is very advantageous to work with someone else when you have a room full of students all of whom want your advice and support! It definitely made the workshop more manageable.



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3 of 3 **Teacher's feedback and evaluation forms**

### How relevant was your planning for the workshop?

For me, the planning was important. We had ideas about what we wanted to achieve and how we wanted to achieve them, but had to be realistic and ensure that there was flexibility within our aims and delivery. You can never be sure what is going to happen in a shelter teaching situation – that's what makes it most rewarding but can also be a source of frustration if you haven't factored that unpredictability into your planning.

### Were you able to achieve your planned aims and objectives? If not why not?

Yes. I think we set the aims and objectives at the right level, bearing in mind the group had very mixed abilities. Some of the students had worked with clay before while some had not, which meant that some were much more confident about having a go than others. Some felt that making a mistake meant that they weren't any good while others could see that making mistakes is a part of the learning process. The more able students had time to make more than one piece while the less confident ones were able to spend longer on getting their one piece just right.

### What did students achieve by coming to the workshop?

The group all seemed to gain in confidence, which was helped by the encouragement and praise they received from shelter staff as well as us. They also had the opportunity to get to know one another better and benefited from having access to a unique environment in the shelter – it was a bit of calm and tranquillity away from the noise and chaos of the communal areas. Mainly, they all produced really good work. The showcase also gave them the chance to show off their work and we were pleased at the number of staff and residents who popped by – possibly just for the cakes but they all had good things to say!

The objectives were: to identify facial expressions, to explore them with clay and produce a finished piece of work.

### What feedback did you get from the students?

Generally very good, a couple of them really surprised themselves and one even produced some excellent homework for the showcase. Some had done this kind of thing before so just wanted to come in and get on with things without being 'taught', others needed a lot of support and encouragement. All said they enjoyed their experience of the workshop and any negative comments were from people who didn't join in.

### Did any students request information about further study?

Yes, some wanted to know what other workshops would be happening in the shelter, some wanted information about City Lit courses and I gave them the prospectuses which were at the shelter. Those who were looking for more detailed information about courses to do once they have moved to a hostel and are more settled I have referred to City Lit co-ordinator, to follow up.

### Are there any staff development issues you would like to raise?

I would like details about the Dealing with Difficult Situations course when it is re-scheduled.



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This report offers guidelines on providing learning opportunities for homeless people. It draws on a successful arts-based learning programme developed by The City Literary Institute and homelessness agencies in central London. The guidelines, interspersed with case study examples, cover a range of topics, from building partnerships, to encouraging learners to take part and progress, and recording achievement. *Crossing the threshold* will interest a wide readership, including learning providers, homelessness agencies, funding bodies, and managers as well as front-line teachers and workers.

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